

Marriage Letter Takes Swipe at Post-Modern Language

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A broad coalition of religious leaders have taken a stand for traditional marriage and asserted that words have meaning and are not endlessly malleable in the service of partisan causes.

Have you ever heard jokes that begin, "A priest, a rabbi and a minister..." Well, let me tell you about a collaboration of priests, rabbis and ministers that is no joke at all. It is very serious ecumenical endeavor in a very serious cause.

Recently an important letter was released to the press and public. "A Letter from America's Religious Leaders in Defense of Marriage" called upon all Americans to act to defend the institution of marriage, which is under attack from homosexual activists determined to re-make marriage in their own image.

Of course, the assault on the institution of marriage did not spring merely from the fantasies of homosexual activists. The spread of no-fault divorce, the rise in out-of-wedlock birth rates, and the growing numbers of absentee dads, along with governmental policies that encourage the same, have all put serious strains upon the institution of marriage. And the letter acknowledges this.

However, the current assault is one of homosexual activists who want to re-make the institution entirely. They claim they want to make it more "inclusive," but a moment's reflection proves this is not the case. There is nothing in the logic of the homosexual activists' argument that would restrict marriage to two people, or to two, or to people. Everything is a matter of personal preference. What I want, I have a legal right to. Thus, if a homosexual wants to be "married," he has that right, never mind that his desire contradicts the nature of the thing (marriage) that he wants. It is a purely post-modernist fantasy in which there is no principle of contradiction and one can re-make the world (the universe and the meaning of life, to use Justice Anthony Kennedy's phrase) as one wishes.

The signatories, the national religious leaders, are to be commended for having the courage to speak out. We have reached a fundamental, cultural crossroads. The philosophy outlined above when cast in the form of a legal brief in the court of an activist judge, eager to make national social policy, is a very combustible and dangerous mixture. Either we act to preserve marriage, or the courts will (eventually) re-make it. The signatories recognized this, and took the bold step of endorsing a specific legislative measure, S.J. Res. 1, the Marriage Protection Amendment ("MPA").

The MPA is short and sweet and straightforward: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor



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the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman." The MPA protects us from activists, policy-making judges, and leaves to the people, to the citizens of each state, to decide if they want to bless other kinds of relationships with legal benefits. Again, the signatories are to be commended for taking the full measure of the threat and for endorsing the only measure (given the reality of an activist judiciary) that can defeat it.

And what a list of signatories it is. Episcopal, Catholic and Pentecostal bishops, Jewish and Mormon leaders, presidents and deans of seminaries, divinity schools and Christian colleges, Roman Catholic Cardinals and Orthodox Primate, leaders of major evangelical ministries, Hispanic, Black and White Christian leaders, editors of important journals, presidents of denominational associations, pastors, priests, rabbis, ministers. It is a mighty coalition — one rarely seen in politics.

The "Letter from America's Religious Leaders" is an important statement against post-modernism. It asserts there are objective truths, words have meaning and are not endlessly malleable in the service of partisan causes. It also asserts the importance of the religious voice in American politics. Contrary to the extreme secularists, it points out that religiously-informed beliefs have an important role in America's deliberations over public policy matters. It also boldly asserts what I think is the most important and compelling finding of social science research of the last 20 years — the best thing for men, for women, and for children is the traditional, natural family founded upon marriage.

Perhaps most important of all the letter is addressed to you. To me, too. In fact, to all American citizens. The letter is really a challenge. It calls upon each and every American citizen to get involved, to fight for the truth, and the institution upon which civilization is founded — traditional, natural marriage.

Will you heed the call?

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